

**REMARKS**

Claims 28 - 36 have been examined and remain pending in this application.

Claims 28, 29, 32 and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Dragone et al. in view of Oguchi et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to a unique and unobvious chip manufacturing method. That method is defined in independent claim 28 and its dependent claims 29-33. A feature of applicant's inventive chip manufacturing method is the inclusion of a step for conducting an optical characteristic test prior to cutting along the curved cutting paths. Clearly neither Dragone nor Oguchi teach or suggest this limitation or the combination of elements disclosed in independent claim 28 and its respective dependent claims.

The present invention has the advantage that it can confirm a characteristic of each element before separating individually. This can be done by conducting an optical characteristic test prior to the cutting along the curved paths. Therefore the method excludes useless work, i.e., cutting out the chip having a bad characteristic.

As the cited art fails to disclose or suggest the step of "conducting an optical characteristic test with respect to each element" or the claimed combinations of claims 28 - 33, these claims patentably distinguish over the cited art.

Claims 30 and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Dragone in view of Oguchi as applied to claim 28 and further in view of Distefano. For at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 28, applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Without admitting an relevance of the Distefano teaching to that which is claimed specifically in

claims 30 and 31, it is pointed out that Distefano fails to make up the deficiencies of Dragone and Oguchi with regard to at least the limitation of conducting an optical characteristic test with respect to each element prior to the cutting along curved paths. Therefore claims 30 and 31 are patentable at least for the reasons given above with respect to claim 28.

Claim 34 is an independent claim claiming a method for manufacturing a chip according to the present invention. Claims 35 and 36 depend from claim 34. Claims 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Dragone in view of Oguchi and further in view of Reinker. Claim 36 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Dragone et al. in view of Oguchi and Reinker as applied to claims 34 and further in view of Forbes et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

At least because the prior art fails to disclose or suggest the claimed step of conducting an optical characteristic test these claims are patentable over the cited art. As discussed with respect to Dragone and Oguchi, these references do not disclose or suggest the optical characteristic test step. Neither Reinker nor Forbes et al. make up the deficiencies of Dragone and Oguchi. Therefore claims 34 and its dependent claims 35 and 36 patentably distinguish over the cited art individually or in any combination thereof.

In view of the foregoing it is respectfully submitted that claims 28 - 36, being all the claims presently in the application, are patentable and this application should therefore be passed to issue at the earliest possible time.


If for any reason the Examiner the application other than in condition for allowance he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Washington, D.C. telephone

Amendment Under 3, C.F.R. § 1.111  
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number 202.293.7060 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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